obtain approvals/clearances under the relevant Acts and Rules regarding safety, pollution control, etc., as applicable. The private parties are also now required get themselves rated from one of the approved rating agencies and submit the rating certificate to the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas and other concerned.

Under the Parallel marketing scheme, private parties are free to have their own marketing, distribution and pricing policies i.e. complete freedom regarding selection, appointment of their dealer/ distributor network etc., the number of customers to be enrolled and whether to maintain a waiting list for release of new connection or not. Such details are not available with the Government.

Decline in the growth of Petroleum production

637. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) to what extent Government's projection for the growth of output of petroleum products showed decline during 1993-94, 1994-95 and 1995-96;

(b) what are the major causes for the fall in the projected output;

(c) the comparative rise in the import of petroleum products during the above period following the fall in the anticipated domestic production;

(d) what is the comparative rise in the cost of petroleum products imported during the above period and its overall bearing the Oil Pool Cess, in terms of comparative deficit; and

(e) whether Government propose to review their policy to make it more objective in making the country self-reliant in petroleum products?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (e) There has been no decline in production of petroleum products during 1993-94, 1994-95 and 1995-96. Quantity and value of import of petroleum products depends upon the overall demand, indigenous production and prices prevailing in the international market. In order to contain oil import bill steps are being taken to increase refinery capacity in the country by expansion of existing refineries in public sector and setting up of refineries in joint sector and private sector. Steps are being taken to increase crude oil production in the country through application of improved technologies, development of new fields, additional development of existing fields and by inviting foreign/private capital in the upstream sector.

Effect of Price Hike of Petroleum Products

638. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the hike in diesel, LPG and petrol has created resentment amongst people in the country;

(b) if so, whether the price hike has affected other sectors also and almost all of them have been demanding increase in prices of their products;

(c) whether Government have calculated its impact on other items; and

(d) if so, to what extent?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) The price increase in July, 1996 was necessitated to contain the deficit in the Oil Pool Account and thus enable the oil companies to maintain uninterrupted supply of petroleum products in the country.

(c) and (d) It was estimated that the direct impact on the wholesale price index on account of increase in prices of petroleum products would be around 0.9%.